

March 8, 2011

Judiciary Committee
Room 2500, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Letter in Support of Raised Bills No. 6539 An Act Concerning Sentence Modification

Dear Judiciary Committee Members:

I am testifying in favor of Raised HB 6475: An Act Concerning Mandatory Minimum Sentences and/or Raised HB 6539: An Act Concerning Sentence Modification. My testimony is this:

In 2001, I was given a definite sentence of fourteen years to serve for Larceny 2nd degree and forgery second degree. Both are non-violent crimes, carrying a maximum sentence of fifteen years. I did not take this matter to trial, but was found guilty by the judge.

During the nine years I spent incarcerated, I tried twice to seek a sentence modification, both times I was denied by the prosecutor and therefore my request for modification was not presented to the judge. The state's attorney stated the reason for his denial was; "It has been, and continues to be, the policy of this office to agree to such requests only on the basis of unique and compelling circumstances." Sort of my own incremental death or possible being in a very unique position to save the life of an official I would continue to fall short of their imposed requirements.

Along with the request to seek modification, I sent copies of over 80 certificated of programs, college course, and vocational courses that I had completed. Also accompanying the request were several letters from promenade members of society, including my family. As a contributor of "I'll Fly Away," a collection of writing produced in the Wally Lamb Writer's group, which I attended for eight years, I began to make restitution to society. I was a modeled inmate, and maintained a discipline-free record. I was a peer-mentor in a support group Known as Sisters Standing Strong, as well as the writers' group. I maintained a job throughout my sentence. Short of being able, to offer the court a significant monetary restitution or the aforementioned examples I do not see what else I could have done to provide the courts with the required qualifications.

I support the raised HB 6539: An Act Concerning Sentence Modification, because I know that people can change, and when that change is because of hard work and a dedication towards rehabilitation then that individual deserves the change to have his or her sentence modified. I asked that you support raised House Bill An Act Concerning Sentence Modification.

Deborah Ranger